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INTRODUCTION

1. The Fourth United Nations European Regional NGO Symposium on the Question of Palestine was held under the auspices of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on 27 and 28 August 1990. The Symposium was convened in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 44/41 B of 6 December 1989.

2. The Symposium was attended by 142 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), 71 of them as observers. It was also attended by several observers from Governments, intergovernmental organizations and United Nations bodies (see annex III below).

3. The Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was represented by a delegation composed of H.E. Mrs. Absa Claude Diallo (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee; H.E. Mr. Alexander Borg Olivier (Malta), Rapporteur; H.E. Mr. Samuel Insanally (Guyana); H.E. Mr. Razzali Ismail (Malaysia) and, Mr. Zuhdi L. Terzi (Palestine).

4. The programme of the Symposium was formulated by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in consultation with the European Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine. Its theme was "The inalienable rights of the Palestinian people". Three panels were held:

(a) On Panel I entitled "Urgent priorities to stop settlements in the occupied territory and protect the Palestinian people. - What can Europe and European NGOs do?", presentations were made by the following experts*:

Mr. Bashir Al-Khairi (Palestinian); Mrs. Marie-Christine Aulas (France); Mr. Maxim Ghilan (France); Dr. Ruchama Marton (Israel); and Mrs. Carla Pecis (Italy).

(b) On Panel II entitled "1990: Time for Peace" - evaluation and follow-up" presentations were made by the following experts:

Mrs. Tamar Gozansky (Israel); Mr. Flavio Lotti (Italy) and Ms. Rana Nashashebi (Palestinian).

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*Three Palestinian panelists, namely Mr. Younis Jaru, Mr. Ghassan El-Khatib and Mr. Faisal Husseini, who had been invited and had agreed to participate in the work of the Symposium, were prevented by the Israeli authorities from leaving the occupied Palestinian territory.

(c) On Panel III entitled "Two peoples - two States. Europe's contribution to achieving peace", presentations were made by the following panelists:

Dr. Mustafa Barghouti (Palestinian); Mrs. Maria Gazi (Greece); Mrs. Tamar Gozansky (Israel); Ms. Salwah Hedeib (Palestinian); and Mr. Nabeel Sha'ath (Palestinian).

5. Four workshops were also held on the following topics:

(a) Refugees (Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic);
(b) Culture;
(c) Involving Jewish communities in Europe;
(d) Trade with the occupied territory.

6. The Symposium adopted a Declaration and Plan of Action, as well as proposals emanating from the workshops (see annexes I and II).

OPENING MEETING

7. Opening the meeting, H.E. Mrs. Absa Claude Diallo (Senegal), Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, said that the question of Palestine was one of the gravest injustices perpetrated against a people subjected for almost half of a century to illegal persecution. That called for increased mobilization of the international community to find a speedy, just and lasting solution to the question of Palestine.

8. The Chairman welcomed the participants, particularly the Palestinians and Israelis who, through their presence, demonstrated their willingness to help in the search for a global, just and lasting solution to the Middle East conflict. She expressed regret that a number of Palestinian panelists invited to attend the Symposium had been prevented from doing so by the Israeli authorities. The Committee protested energetically against such arbitrary decisions which constituted a violation of the freedom of movement and of association of Palestinians of the occupied territory and was also contrary to the obligation of States Members of the United Nations to permit persons under its jurisdiction to participate in a meeting organized by the Organization.

9. The Committee was fully aware of the role which many European NGOs could play in the efforts to achieve a just solution of the Middle East crisis by exerting considerable influence on the positions and policies of their respective Governments. The Committee deeply appreciated a number of important NGO activities initiated mostly by the European Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine.

10. The Committee had also followed with great interest and satisfaction the efforts of the countries members of the European Community to help in breaking

the current diplomatic impasse on the Palestinian question and progress towards its peaceful resolution. The decision to appoint a representative of the Community to the occupied territory as well as the numerous and pertinent resolutions of the European Parliament were important developments which could contribute to the common efforts aimed at bringing peace and security to the Middle East.

11. Despite the growing international support for the Palestinian people, the situation in the occupied territory remained intolerable and unacceptable because of the Israeli intransigence and its increased use of armed repression. The continuing violent incidents in the occupied territory and in Israel, as well as the increasing flow of Soviet Jewish immigrants, made the situation even more explosive.

12. It was most essential that all the NGOs in collaboration with their respective Governments, the intergovernmental organizations and the international community should further mobilize and increase their efforts. Meanwhile, assistance had to be increased and adequate protection had to be guaranteed to the Palestinian population living in the occupied territory.

13. Mr. Mikko Lohikoski, Chairman of the European Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine, said that during a trip to the Middle East a few months earlier he could feel the thunder of events to come. Feelings of frustration were being felt among the Palestinian population, and many were questioning why they were called upon by the international community to follow all the rules of international legitimacy while the same international community could not guarantee the respect of their basic rights? Those frustrations were justified. There was no alternative to the respect of international legitimacy and a political settlement of the question of Palestine based only on the principle of "two peoples - two States".

14. The United Nations had condemned Iraq for its annexation of Kuwait, an aggression which had cleared the way for an open and massive foreign military presence in the region which could lead to an aggravation of the already dangerous development. The NGOs had to call upon all States concerned to support every diplomatic effort, and show extreme restraint in order to prevent an overall confrontation.

15. Since the Security Council had awakened the dormant resolutions and powers inherent in the United Nations Charter, that newly found capacity should be used to find a just solution of the question of Palestine. The Security Council should be entrusted with the same powers as used against the aggression perpetrated by Iraq to make Israel implement the United Nations resolutions.

16. It was a must that an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations be convened without further delay. Only by strengthening the spirit which guided all the people involved in the "1990: Time for Peace" initiative, would the desired goals be achieved.

17. Mr. Zuhdi Labib Terzi, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, said that in Europe, many people were involved in the efforts to put an end to the suffering of his people. He understood that the United Nations Secretary-General would be meeting with the Foreign Minister of Iraq to defuse the situation and added that King Hussein of Jordan and President Yasser Arafat were also undertaking efforts for an Arab solution. It was a fact that armies never brought peace. That was what the intifadah proved.

18. The Palestinian people were continuing their efforts, supported by the international community, he said. However, some Governments had lost all credibility, particularly the United States, which was discriminatory and not even-handed in its policies. There was also no credibility in the Israeli Government, which denied the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

19. A solution to the problem of Palestine must be the goal, he said. The Symposium should focus on a number of pressing elements, among them, how to persist in efforts to convene the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. There was no alternative to such a conference. The Symposium must also address the plight of the Palestinians in the occupied territory. Israel was an occupying Power, and so there should be a protecting power for the Palestinians. He hoped that attention would be focused on how to protect the Palestinians under occupation.

20. The Symposium was convened on the eve of the World Summit for Children, he said. Palestinian children were suffering, and he hoped that their suffering would also be addressed at the World Summit and a remedy found. The first step was the termination of the occupation. The mass transfer of population to Israel and occupied Palestine should also receive attention. Everyone had the right to move from one place to another but that right should also apply to Palestinians to return to their homes. Also, the right of movement of Soviet Jews was infringing on the right of Palestinians in their own country. That mass transfer should be contingent upon Israel's compliance with international conventions and Security Council resolutions on the subject. Israel should be called upon to comply with Security Council resolution 242 (1967).

21. The co-operation the Palestinians were getting from Europe was highly appreciated, he said, particularly assistance in bolstering the economic structure. Special attention should be given to preventing Israel from its policy of imposing ignorance and illiteracy on the Palestinian people. Schools should be reopened and remain so. Among the efforts of NGOs, the human chain of peace around the city of Jerusalem in December 1989 was a beacon of hope and had left Palestinians with positive feelings.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Panel I: "Urgent priorities to stop settlements in the occupied territory and protect the Palestinian people: What can Europe and European non-governmental organizations do?"

22. Mrs. Marie-Christine Aulas (France), member of the European Parliament, said that the problem of the settlements in the occupied territories annexed by Israel began before 1948 and continued after 1967. It had to be linked to the history of the land-acquisition policy in Palestine, a policy which, inter alia, stipulated that land had to be emptied of Palestinians in order to be occupied by Israelis.

23. Once the State of Israel was created in 1948, the Zionist movement started to put into place a legal system enabling them to legitimize the acquisition and "judaizing" of Palestinian land, as well as the nationality of its inhabitants. The Law of Return, which automatically gave Israeli citizenship to any Jew wishing to settle in Israel, was adopted and was followed two years later by the "Law of Nationality". Looking closely at those laws, it was clear that they constituted the legitimatization of a concept based on error and prejudice and consequently not only did not serve the purpose of the individual or collective freedom but rather, they prompted people to act against the universal concept of law. Ever since 1967, the last remaining pieces of land from the former Palestine had been undergoing a reactualized form of the same process as the one it went through prior to 1968.

24. About a year ago migrations had begun and the international community had adopted many resolutions and taken various stands against the Soviet Jewish immigration in the occupied territory. Even if the question of immigration to Israel was a matter of concern to the extent that it involved the occupied Palestinian territory, the most fundamental and pressing issue currently remained the protection of the Palestinian population.

25. The current crisis, caused by the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq which had to be condemned, could indirectly help the region come out of its stagnation. Even though the Palestinian question was not at the centre of the crisis, it was part of it. Once the threat of military intervention was over, changes would undoubtedly occur. Among them, there would be the renewed desire of the international community to compel Israel to respect international law.

26. Mr. Bashir Al-Khairi, a Palestinian lawyer and activist, said racist Israel was a settler entity built upon uprooting people from their land and implanting new settlers who had no ties there. Those Jewish settlements depended on assistance from Europe and the United States for their construction. The inhabitants were encouraged to go there even though they retained all their rights in their countries of origin.

27. Racist mobilization permitted the acquisition of the land of others by force, he said, as well as arms, without which violence could not be practised against the Palestinians. The Israeli military depended on the arsenal obtained from some European countries and the United States. European assistance also provided support to the settlements. The water and land resources of Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza had been confiscated by the Israelis. There was the dispersal of people who had caused no harm to the Jewish people and who had been prepared to live with them in peace. He went on to recall that in 1964, at the age of five, he was forced to leave Palestine. He had subsequently spent 16 years in Israeli prisons because he loved his people and land and because he opposed occupation. He was expelled from his homeland in 1988, but that had only increased his love for his people and his opposition to occupation.

28. He called on Europe to give no assistance to Israel and to oppose the expropriation of Palestinian land. He appealed to the international community to speak against all who gave aid to Israel as it pursued its policies against the Palestinian people. All countries which supported the immigration of Jews to Palestine should be condemned, as that meant the further uprooting of Palestinians from their land.

29. Dr. Ruchama Marton, Chairperson of the Association of Israeli-Palestinian Physicians for Human Rights, after describing the dilemma met by one of her Israeli physics students on "where the border-line should be in refusing to collaborate with the settlers", said that many young Israelis were living in settlements in the occupied territory not for ideological reasons, but mostly because they were given special benefits. The economic temptation was one of the main driving forces which had prompted Israelis to reside in the territories. Social pressure combined with economic temptation, constituted the central pillar of the Israeli consensus. Because of the rising power of the Israeli consensus, those who actively opposed settlement in the territories were driven into the social and political margins of Israel.

30. The Labour Party had been for years attempting to present itself as the leader of the struggle to preserve the image of a "beautiful Israeli personifying, on the one hand, the fighting pioneer who defends his country and is attached to the land, and on the other hand, the socialist pacifist who believes in equality and peace." The Labour Party's conception regarding settlement reflected that essential contradiction.

31. The new immigrants from the Soviet Union were not Zionist. They came to Israel to rebuild themselves, to live in modern houses with modern electrical equipment, and enjoy books, music and theater. They certainly did not intend to go and live in settlements in parched mountains with roads paved with stones. Despite the fact that their living conditions and particularly their housing situation had deteriorated, the possibility of their surrendering to economic temptation or social pressure and of choosing settlement was remote.

32. Those who wished to generate an active political protest against the settlements had to find new ways and approaches, namely - a boycott of the settlements, with everything it implied, particularly severance of all social contacts with the settlers' families; refusal of the soldiers to guard the settlements, to accompany the settlers' children to their community centres, to engage in their protection and security; refusal to purchase products from the settlements; refusal to co-operate directly or indirectly with the settlers; refusal on the part of the Palestinians to build the settlements to clean them or to do any work there.

33. Such actions against the settlements could prompt the American and world Jewry to become more critical of the settlements. Such actions could allow the American Jewry to carefully examine the destination to which their donation funds were channeled. An alliance between the American Jewry and the Israeli left would initiate a significant turn which would influence the American Government as well as the European Community which had already taken that road.

34. Mrs. Carla Pecis, member of the General Confederation of Italian Workers, said that trade unions in her country were working for the rights of the Palestinian people to a homeland and to peace. It was urgent to find common understanding to relaunch efforts in Europe to defend and support the Palestinian cause. Too many discussions had taken place since the intifadah, yet nothing had stopped Israeli repression. The initiative of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was defeated by Israel and the United States, as were the efforts of peace-loving people. There was a need to recover credibility for the purpose of negotiations.

35. The new and dangerous phenomenon of Soviet Jewish immigration to the occupied territory could put an end to any peaceful solution. That immigration meant that Israel was engaged in warfare. Only by elimination of all Palestinians could the Israelis succeed in their plans. They used poor people against other poor and landless people. The Jews of the Soviet Union had the right to emigrate, but only without infringing on the rights of Palestinians already living there. Those wishing to travel to other countries should be assisted in doing so. It was inhuman and anti-Semitic for any State to close its borders to Jewish immigration. A position must be taken against that phenomenon. On the European level, a group of experts must be brought together to defend and preserve the Palestinian and Arab culture of Jerusalem.

36. The efforts of the European community had not had much impact on the conflict, she said. The dialogue between the PLO and the United States must be resumed. Action must be taken at all levels in order to make negotiations possible. Also necessary for peace were the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied territory; the reopening of schools and universities in the occupied territory; the release of prisoners; exercise of the right to work and property; and the establishment of contacts between Israelis and Palestinians. Italy was making efforts towards those objectives. They included protection for the civilian population by sending observers to live in the occupied territory and the doubling of aid for the Palestinian economy.

The Council of Europe must continue its policy of providing aid to the occupied territory. There must be sanctions and boycotts against Israeli agricultural products. If schools and universities did not open, the budget provisions to finance scientific co-operation with Israel would be cut.

37. Mr. Maxim Ghilan, of the International Jewish Peace Union, said he was a Jew and an Israeli who had fought against a foreign boot on his neck; while engaged in fighting, (during the Israeli War of Independence), he refused to plant his boot on the Palestinians' necks, and fought therefore for Palestinian rights.

38. A touchy problem was that of Soviet Jews, he said. There was panic among them and they wanted to emigrate. Because of agreements between Israel and the United States, only between 50,000 and 80,000 immigrants could now go to the United States. Consequently, hundreds of thousands more had to settle in Israel. That would lead to catastrophe for the Soviet immigrants, for Palestinians and for Israelis. Young Israelis could no longer find housing; Palestinians were being dislocated; and the commitment not to send immigrants to occupied territory, particularly to the greater Jerusalem area, was not being kept. Homes were being purchased in the occupied territory and people persuaded to move into them. The jobless rate in Israel had grown from 120,000 to 200,000. Palestinian workers were even more adversely affected. The whole social, national and territorial fabric of Israel was coming apart thanks to the immigration of hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews. There were estimates that some 2 million Jews might leave the Soviet Union. The Israelis thought they could change the demographic balance permanently given the Palestinians' high birth rate per family. They could not. Their actions succeeded only in worsening the situation for all concerned.

39. European Governments should not interdict immigration to Israel, he said. The problem must be solved in a different manner. Governments in Europe and the United States must be convinced to open their borders to Soviet immigrants who did not want to go to Israel. European Governments must help those Jews who wanted to start a new life, by permitting a token number of, say, 20,000 in each European country. The Soviet Union should assure the Jews in that country that they could be part of the republics without giving up their Jewishness. It was also important that Jewish life should continue. Jews must see Israel not as the centre of the world but a place where Jews lived. In order to do so, a Jewish Committee to open borders had been created. He asked the meeting to support this policy.

Panel II: "1990: Time for Peace" initiative, evaluation and follow-up"

40. Mrs. Tamar Gozansky, a member of the Israeli Knesset representing the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, said that 1990 had started with hope, since the intifadah, the end of the Iran-Iraq War and a temporary calm in Lebanon had helped direct the spotlight to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, increasing pressure for the Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territory.

41. The United States' efforts to bring together Palestinians and Israelis had failed. The illegal invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, while causing grave damage to the region's people, could be used by the Shamir Government to impose harsher measures against Palestinians, grant the United States military bases in Israeli territory or invade Jordan. While the intifadah had strengthened the Israeli peace camp, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait had caused confusion in its ranks.

42. The activities which had taken place in Jerusalem, calling for a peace initiative in 1990, had contributed to a higher level of unity among the peace-lovers in Israel. The political activities, including "1990: Time for Peace", had helped change the widely held opinion that among the Palestinians there was no counterpart to the Israeli peace movement. In addition to Israelis and Palestinians, the participation of people from Europe and the United States was of great significance, since it proved once again that the international community had a deep interest in solving the Arab-Israeli conflict.

43. The intifadah and the "1990: Time for Peace" activities had created greater public pressure in Israel to abolish the law against meeting PLO leaders and activists. The occupation and oppression of the Palestinians continued, but it had not abolished or dismissed the meaning of peace efforts. The urgent and immediate aim of the dialogue between Palestinian and Israeli peace-lovers was to change Israeli public opinion and its long-term aim was to push the Israeli Government towards a dialogue with the PLO.

44. The only basis for a solution to the Israeli-Arab conflict was a just solution of the Palestinian question. A peace conference, under the auspices of the United Nations, was necessary for the achievement of a comprehensive solution based on balancing the different interests and ensuring the security of all parties to the Israeli-Arab conflict. The Gulf crisis had proved the importance of the involvement of the United Nations Security Council and this practice should be applied to the Israeli-Arab conflict as soon as possible.

45. Mr. Flavio Lotti, National Spokesperson of the Italian Peace Association, an organizer of the Jerusalem Peace March, said the purpose of the march was to demonstrate that peace was possible and urgent. Although disrupted, Palestinians and Israelis, holding hands, had shouted their demand for peace.

46. As a member of the peace movement, he could not accept Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. All diplomatic means must be employed to pressure Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait. However, he disagreed with countries such as the United States, which responded with military initiative. The United Nations did have the responsibility of finding a peaceful solution of the crisis. The current confrontation could only be bad for the Palestinians. If the crisis in the Gulf persisted, many Palestinians would be forced out from occupied territories into Jordan.

47. The solution of the Palestinian problem was the key to attain peace in the Middle East. There must be pressure for a peace initiative, for an international peace conference that would end the Israeli occupation and establish a Palestinian State side by side with Israel. That would be a sure way to isolate Saddam Hussein rather than by a military blockade.

48. The human peace chain in Jerusalem had demonstrated an initiative and flexibility not shown by Governments, he said. They had to overcome mistrust, fears and troubles. That same spirit and clear *political* platform must continue, although obstacles remained. European peace forces must strengthen relations with Israeli and Palestinian groups. His organization had decided that the next initiative should take place in Europe, which was itself undergoing tremendous changes.

49. He called for an international presence in the West Bank and Gaza for the protection of the Palestinians there, and for pressure on Israel to stop constructing settlements in the occupied territories, to stop the violence against Palestinians and to begin dialogue with the PLO. His organization had proposed to organize national parliamentary hearings to which joint Israeli and Palestinian delegations would be invited; to hold a European conference in Brussels next spring involving all the parties concerned; and to hold a peace march in Italy on 7 October, to which all were invited.

50. Ms. Rana Nashashebi, a Palestinian and member of the Union of Palestinian Working Women Committees in Independent Palestine, said that with the Gulf crisis, more emphasis was being given to the Symposium and to the role of NGOs. While attention had turned away from the Palestinian issue, Israel was using the occasion to increase its repression of her people. She called on NGOs to clarify the Palestinian position, which was being distorted.

51. Efforts must be made towards ending the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land, she said, the longest in modern history. The world was moving towards a resolution of regional conflicts everywhere except in the Middle East. Palestinians hoped Europe and the rest of the world would pressure Israel to respond to the language of peace. Non-governmental organizations had an important role to play, by persuading their Governments to put pressure and impose sanctions on Israel.

52. She thanked the organizers of the "1990: Time for Peace" initiative and welcomed the holding of similar activities. With Palestinians and Israelis shouting for peace, she said, the Israeli authorities were embarrassed and had responded with violence. That experience and others had been very important for her as a woman, as they demonstrated the role of women in the peace process. European NGOs must involve more peace and solidarity forces in Europe in organizing such activities. A delegation of Israelis and Palestinians should tour Europe to raise the issue again. Peace-loving Israelis must not allow themselves to be overpowered by their Government and be prevented from taking part in peace activities.

53. She called on Europe and European NGOs to bring pressure on Israel to force it to the negotiating table. There must be an international peace conference which would include the five permanent members of the Security Council and the representative of the PLO. That, she said, was the only way peace would come to the region.

Panel III: "Two peoples - two States. Europe's contribution to achieving peace"

54. Mrs. Maria Gazi, of the Greek Committee for International Democratic Solidarity, said that her presentation on Panel III was not as one of an expert on the matter, but of an ordinary member of the European community who, when listening to the reports on the plight of the Palestinian people in the occupied territory, was wondering what Europe was doing to stop the massacre.

55. Europe could play a decisive role for the achievement of a just and peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict since European countries had the opportunity to give political, moral and material support to the Palestinian people, and also to put pressure on Israel until it complied with United Nations and other resolutions adopted by international and European organizations.

56. No other regional conflict had sensitized world public opinion as the Palestinian issue, and a multitude of NGOs dealing with Palestinian national rights had been created, which in close co-operation with local Palestinian NGOs, had been able to undertake projects to meet the socio-economic needs of the Palestinian people.

57. Since its creation, the European Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine had been able to co-ordinate actions such as the "1990: Time for Peace" initiative.

58. Although not a single European Government denied the right of Palestinians to self-determination and all voted in favour of the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East, that was not sufficient.

59. The Gulf crisis was having a serious impact on the Middle East conflict and, consequently, on the Palestinian issue. It was to be deplored that the Governments and inter-governmental bodies which had rightly reacted resolutely against the Iraqi invasion and annexation of Kuwait had never taken any measures against the Israeli occupation and annexation of the Palestinian and Arab territories.

60. Europe was not yet one entity. But, in view of the radical changes that had occurred in Eastern Europe, the European Community was bound to play an increasingly important role. Since the European Community was Israel's largest trading partner, it could therefore put stronger pressure on the

Israeli Government. The European Parliament and the European Council of Ministers had adopted a number of measures and resolutions, but more dynamic measures were required by European Governments if they really wanted to see the Middle East conflict settled peacefully and justly.

61. The conflict had to be solved through the International Peace Conference on the Middle East with the participation of the PLO and under the auspices of the United Nations. In their dealings with Israel, the European Governments should promote that solution.

62. Dr. Mustafa Barghouti, volunteer president of the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees, as an introductory note to his statement, mentioned that a number of Palestinian participants from the occupied territory had been prevented or forbidden by the Israeli authorities from leaving the country. Those actions reflected a serious and ominous change in Israeli policy towards the Palestinians.

63. Regarding the Gulf crisis, the Palestinian position was not, as some Europeans had stated, ambiguous: the Palestinians and their leadership had taken a clear and responsible position; they did not approve of the occupation by force of Kuwait, particularly because it involved a flagrant violation of international law. An end should be put to the intervention and escalation in the region, to give a chance for the restoration of peace through negotiations, particularly in the framework of the Palestinian peace proposals and of the Arab world with a distinct role for the United Nations Secretary-General. Stability would return to the Middle East only if all aspects of the Middle East question were addressed and not just one of them.

64. There was increasing frustration exhibited by the Palestinian people because of the fact that, after more than two and a half years of the Palestinian intifadah, with its great suffering and thousands of victims, no progress had been achieved. Another reason for frustration was the fact that double standards were being applied by Western countries with regard to international matters.

65. The Gulf crisis was closely linked to the question of oil and energy resources, and it had to be feared that the gap between North and South would be increased. Efforts should be made to restructure the world economic order as a whole, in a way which would guarantee that the interests of developing countries would be addressed. There was a clear risk that Israel would use the Gulf crisis to implement its policy of transferring the Palestinian people out of the occupied territories.

66. Europe needed an independent line and independent political action in relation to the Palestinian-Israeli crisis. It should come forth with initiatives, not simply with statements. It was necessary that European NGOs, Governments and intergovernmental organizations apply pressure concerning imports and education for the Palestinians and help in the process of establishing an independent Palestinian infrastructure, and ensuring a

permanent European presence, independent of the Israeli authorities, directed towards the protection of Palestinian organizations and activities.

67. Mrs. Tamar Gozansky, a member of the Israeli Knesset representing the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, said that the Israeli and the Palestinian people were realists, and that any attempt to ignore one of them would lead to more bloodshed and undermine their very existence. The ruling Israeli circles were ignoring the PLO, the national rights of the Palestinian people and its very existence. The task of European and other NGOs was to convince the Israeli people that such a policy was harmful and dangerous.

68. Half of the Israeli Jews were ready to accept the need for a withdrawal from the occupied territories. Another 25 per cent opposed withdrawal because of fear, suspicion or animosity and, their attitude had to be changed.

69. The intifadah had created a new political situation and it had revived politically and psychologically the Green Line (June 1967 border).

70. The Gulf crisis had created much confusion in the Israeli peace camp, and many were turning their backs on the dialogue with the PLO.

71. Given the fear among the Israeli Jews, an alternative concept of security had to be put forward. Its components, namely, the isolation of the "transferrist", right-wing parties' organizations, a comprehensive peace with no more occupation or annexation, a just solution of the Palestine problem, a non-aligned foreign policy, regional economic co-operation, a treaty making the region free of nuclear, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction, agreements on the reduction of all regional armies with mutual monitoring could be achieved only by a "two peoples - two States" solution, being reached in the framework of an international conference with the participation of the PLO, the Israeli Government, and all parties to the conflict.

72. Ms. Salwa Hedeib, after mentioning that she was addressing the meeting in replacement of Mr. Faisal Husseini, who was prevented by the Israeli authorities from travelling to Geneva, said that the position of most European Governments vis-à-vis the recognition of the rights of the Palestinians to an independent State could be summed up in three words - yes, no and maybe:

"Did the European Governments support the right of the Palestinians to statehood? Yes.

"Were they willing to take a free man's stand vis-à-vis the refusal of the Israeli Government to talk peace with the PLO and evacuate the West Bank and Gaza Strip? No.

"Were they able and willing to put more pressure on the Israeli Government to withdraw from the occupied territories to enable the Palestinians to establish an independent State? Maybe."

73. It was true that, since the Madrid Declaration of 1989, the European Governments had changed their position and Western Europe was embracing a more active role in the peace process. But any settlement had to be worked out by the parties themselves, namely the PLO and Israel.

74. The European Governments, with the help of its private citizens and the NGOs, had to take action against the Israeli settlement of Soviet Jews, which meant the end of an idea of a Palestinian State.

75. Mr. Nabeel Sha'ath, Chairman of the Political Committee of the Palestine National Council, said that the problem in the Persian Gulf could not be separated from the problem of Palestine and the problems of international peace. It was one of the most lethal crises since the Second World War.

76. The occupation of Palestine traced back to 1948 and was continuing with further, increased occupation and use of force. The current situation could not be looked at without including in the analysis the Palestine question before and after 2 August 1990.

77. The Palestinian people had a lot of reasons to be disheartened in the three months before 2 August. In 1988, they had taken the decision to concentrate on a political, peaceful, negotiated solution and therefore had agreed to undertake a process of dialogue and negotiation which would involve compromise - giving up parts of their country in order to allow them to establish a State of their own. All they asked for was recognition of their inalienable rights, their own land, and a two State solution.

78. In the process of trying to make that solution possible, the Palestinians had started an alliance with Europe because of the fact that Europe had been supporting causes based on human and national rights in the third world. Therefore Europe could play an important role in achieving a solution affirming the human and national rights of the Palestinian people.

79. In addition, Europe had also played an important role in initiating the dialogue between the United States and the PLO. The intifadah, which had been going on for over two years, had taken on even greater importance in adding to the persuasive role of the Palestinian political campaign. The process of conflict resolution was one requiring persuasion and pressure.

80. Pressure, in the form of sanctions, had been effective in South Africa and in many other places. But, as far as the question of Palestine was concerned, the only pressure brought upon the Israelis had been the sacrifice of the Palestinian people. Sanctions to be applied to Israel was not a word to be uttered, and was taboo in Europe.

81. As for the United States, any kind of criticism of Israel was unthinkable. The United States would not even allow the sending of a Security Council fact-finding mission to the occupied territory as that would mean criticizing Israel. The peace process had dwindled. Yet the PLO stood fast to the resolutions of the Palestine National Council adopted at Algiers, to

the speech made by Mr. Yasser Arafat in the United Nations, and to the use of peaceful means, reaffirming all of its principles.

82. The Iraqi-Kuwaiti problem began on 2 August; all the political principles which were applied to the solution of the Palestine question were abandoned in favour of a military solution. The United Nations resolutions were being applied to the Gulf crisis, but not because of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For the first time in human history, a war was on the verge of erupting on the world's reserves of oil, the world's most combustible, most dangerous, and most important commodity.

83. The Palestinian position towards the Persian Gulf crisis did not ignore the rights of the Kuwaiti people to their own land, their legitimacy or their self-determination. It called for nothing but a peaceful, political solution, a solution preserving the interests and the rights of both parties. The position of the PLO was very clear: to work towards achieving a peaceful solution of the Gulf crisis, a solution based on international law; the United Nations Charter and commitment to dialogue and negotiations and willingness to propose solutions that protected the dignity and the rights of all parties. The first and foremost of the principles required the withdrawal of the Iraqi forces from Kuwait. The PLO's only objection was to the presence of the American forces, believing that it was not a mediating presence, but an occupying one.

84. The PLO applied to the Gulf crisis the position which it had applied to its own crisis: a peaceful solution; a regional solution, preferably an Arab solution in order to avoid foreign intervention and occupation; a negotiated solution, not an imposed one; international legitimacy with a role to be played by the United Nations and the application of its Charter principles. PLO wanted to avoid an apocalypse. On the matter of implementation of principles, a peaceful process was desired, not war. Palestinians were suffering a great deal in the Gulf crisis, since there were 450,000 Palestinians in Kuwait.

85. Peace in the Gulf would safeguard the world's oil reserves, would safeguard the Arab region and would return matters to the primacy of the Palestine problem. Peace in the Gulf was the first step to be immediately followed by the resolution of the Palestine problem.

CLOSING STATEMENTS

86. Mr. Mikko Lohikoski, Chairman of the European Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine, introduced the declaration on behalf of the Symposium. He appealed to all the participants to maintain the spirit of co-operation, which should be their only guideline. Acting differently would lead to failure, not only for all those involved, but particularly for the Palestinian people, who needed solidarity and help.

87. Reverend Ibrahim Ayyad, President of the Palestine Committee for NGOs, thanked all the participants for their efforts to promote awareness of the injustice inflicted on the Palestinian people. The intifadah, the Palestinian peace initiative and the many NGO symposia convened under the auspices of the United Nations had greatly contributed to changing international public opinion in favour of the Palestinian cause.

88. It was to be deplored that Europe was following the biased policy and wishes of the American administration on the question of Palestine. Regarding the Gulf crisis, the PLO's position was for mediation, it was against any occupation, and called for the convening of an Arab summit and for the withdrawal of American and other foreign troops which only aggravated the situation. The United States applied double standards in the region, having done nothing to end Zionist occupation. Non-governmental organizations had to intensify their efforts to help the cause of the Palestinian people and enable them to live peacefully with dignity in their own independent State.

89. Mrs. Absa Claude Diallo, Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, welcomed the adoption of a constructive declaration and of a programme of activities which would contribute positively to the efforts towards a peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine.

90. Despite a movement towards peace in the past two years, owing particularly to the Palestinian peace initiative and to the subsequent efforts to bring together the parties to the negotiating table, the continued repression in the occupied territory, as well as the intransigence of the Israeli Government have exacerbated the situation, and created a climate of deep frustration and pessimism. The suffering, as well as the vulnerability of the Palestinian population to the Israeli aggression had increased. In addition, the fears caused by the massive arrival of Soviet Jews, had been increased by the measures taken by the Israeli Government to strengthen the expansion of settlements.

91. The tense situation which prevailed in the Gulf was highly preoccupying. The Committee was closely watching the situation and hoped that every member of the international community would implement the resolutions adopted by the Security Council, and that the diplomatic efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General of the United Nations would contribute to a peacefully negotiated outcome of the crisis.

92. More than ever it was imperative to define ways to progress towards a just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine which would contribute to easing the tension in the area and establishing a global and lasting peace. The Committee was determined to intensify its efforts towards that essential objective, particularly through the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East.

93. The participants in the Symposium had expressed their support for the struggle of the Palestinian people to end the Israeli occupation and exercise

their national inalienable rights, particularly the right to self-determination and to establish an independent Palestinian State. The PLO, the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, should participate on an equal footing with the other parties to the International Peace Conference on the Middle East. It was imperative, meanwhile, that measures be taken to ensure the protection of the Palestinian people, particularly of women and children living under occupation.

94. The Committee was of the view that it was particularly appropriate that the question of Palestine be examined in the context of a European Symposium: the European peoples and Governments had a central role to play in ensuring a peaceful settlement of the question. The price of inaction was too high; not only for the Palestinians, but also for the Israelis and all the other people of the region. If the deadlock continued, a much more severe and bloody cataclysm could erupt.

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Annex I

DECLARATION AND PLAN OF ACTION ADOPTED BY
THE FOURTH UNITED NATIONS EUROPEAN REGIONAL NGO SYMPOSIUM
ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

1. The participants expressed appreciation for the opportunity once again to discuss various aspects of the question of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict under the auspices of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. They considered that the Symposium, by providing a forum for an exchange of opinions as well as experiences about concrete actions, had made a positive contribution to the peace process.

2. The participants reconfirmed their support to the intifadah and the Palestinian peace initiative of November 1988. These were seen by the participants as genuine proofs of the willingness of Palestinian people and their sole legitimate representative, the PLO, to search for a mutually acceptable, just peace. They appealed to the European Governments to support unequivocally these decisions and to establish official relations with the PLO, and to recognize the State of Palestine if they had not yet done so.

The participants deeply regretted that the United States had decided to suspend its dialogue with the PLO and expressed the hope that it would be re-established as soon as possible and its scope expanded to include the consideration of substantive issues in a constructive way so as to enhance the process of negotiations leading to a just and lasting solution of the question of Palestine.

3. The participants reaffirmed their conviction that negotiations based on the two States, Palestine and Israel, principle, which addresses the basic rights and concerns of both the Palestinians and the Israelis, would result in peace and justice in the Middle East, based on the principles embodied in General Assembly resolutions 181 (II) and 194 (III). Reports from the "1990: Time for Peace" initiative, organized at Jerusalem from 29 to 31 December 1989, and various other peace initiatives indicated that important sectors of the Israeli public have become active in support of the "two States" solution.

Appreciation was expressed for the position adopted by a large number of European and other Governments and NGOs in response to the proclamation of the State of Palestine to exist side by side with the State of Israel. The participants stressed that peace negotiations should be based on the formula embodied in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and on the implementation of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, primarily their right to self-determination, and should provide a foundation for a just and lasting peace settlement.

4. The participants welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 44/42 of 6 December 1989 by an overwhelming vote in favour of this balanced and comprehensive solution which, for the first time was supported by all European States. In this resolution, the Assembly reaffirmed the necessity of convening the International Peace Conference on the Middle East under the auspices of the United Nations with the participation of all parties to the conflict, including the PLO, on equal footing, and the five permanent members of the Security Council. The participants deeply regretted that there has been no progress in that regard. The PLO has explicitly accepted these resolutions. However, the Government of Israel has by its recent statements and practical actions demonstrated that it continues to violate the Security Council resolutions.

5. The Symposium was organized while an extremely dangerous situation was gaining momentum in the Gulf, threatening to draw the whole region into a catastrophe of immense dimensions.

The participants reaffirmed their respect for international law and United Nations principles. Accordingly, they considered that the acquisition of territory by force is illegal. The participants called upon Iraq to comply with the Security Council resolutions demanding the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait. Only the strict observance of the Security Council resolutions can prevent the crisis from spilling over into a military confrontation, which would harm the interests of all peoples in the region. Therefore, the participants urged all Governments to refrain from any military actions which should be undertaken - if necessary - exclusively under the authority of the Security Council with all armed forces, including those of the United States, being placed under United Nations command.

The participants noted that diplomatic efforts were being undertaken by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and by others including members of the League of Arab States and expressed the hope that these endeavours would contribute towards a peaceful solution of the crisis.

The participants, noting the near unanimity attained by the Security Council in dealing with this crisis and welcoming the higher profile of the United Nations and its Security Council, called upon its permanent members, especially the three European states - France, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union - to show the same resoluteness in solving the Arab-Israeli conflict and its core question of Palestine and in securing the implementation of its resolutions concerning this question.

Participants emphasized that the current crisis in the Gulf should not in any way detract from the urgent attention that needs to be given to a solution of the question of Palestine, without which there cannot be lasting peace and stability in the region.

6. The participants strongly denounced the continued violations by Israel of the human rights of the Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory, which has led to continued loss of life. The European NGOs, as part of the

international community, have repeatedly declared that the Israeli policies and practices in the occupied Palestinian territory are in gross violation of its obligations as a party to the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and contrary to United Nations resolutions and generally recognized norms of international law.

The participants requested the European Governments parties to the Convention to fulfil their duty by ensuring that Israel stops the violations of its provisions.

The participants expressed in particular their grave concern at the continued closure of Palestinian universities since 1988, and called for their immediate reopening. They further called upon the Governments of European States and upon the European Community to restrict educational and cultural contacts with Israel until such time as all Palestinian educational establishments are reopened.

7. The participants viewed with grave concern the consequences of continued, massive immigration to Israel from Eastern European countries while at the same time the Government of Israel was increasing its settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory and especially in Jerusalem, contrary to principles of international law and repeated Security Council resolutions. More Palestinian lands are slated for confiscation, existing Jewish settlements are being expanded and the planning and building of new settlements continue unabated. At the same time, the Israeli Government refuses to recognize the right of Palestinians to return to their homes.

The participants strongly requested the European Governments to undertake resolute actions collectively and individually to ensure that Israel ceases all settlement activity in the occupied Palestinian territory, in conformity with Security Council resolution 465 (1980).

The participants supported the right of freedom of movement and the right of everyone to leave any country and the right of return to one's own country. However, these rights cannot be used as a pretext to settle immigrants or Israeli civilians in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem. They urged the European Governments to undertake any necessary efforts to ensure that the Security Council would act to prevent such illegal settlements.

The participants call upon States concerned with Jewish immigration, particularly the Soviet Union, to seek guarantees that such immigration will not lead to settlement in the occupied Palestinian territory, thereby infringing upon the right of the Palestinian people, and will be in conformity with relevant United Nations resolutions and legal instruments on human rights.

They also requested the European and other Governments to help the plight of Soviet Jews and other immigrants by enabling those who wish to settle in Europe to do so.

8. Participants expressed concern that the idea of expulsion (transfer) of Palestinians out of their country had gained further political legitimacy in Israel when new extremist parties such as Moledet and Tzomet entered the Israeli Parliament on the basis of transfer programmes.

Since then, more and more voices within the Israeli establishment and public opinion are openly calling for the further mass expulsion of Palestinians from their homeland as a means of solving the Palestinian question and making room for the new massive Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel.

In the light of the growing danger of war in the Middle East and the possible participation of Israel in this war, concern was expressed that the Israeli establishment may foster and use the atmosphere of war to carry out this plan of further mass expulsion of the Palestinian people.

The participants called upon the international community and Europe in particular to exercise due diligence in that regard to prevent Israel from carrying out such plans.

9. The participants expressed their grave concern about the violence against Palestinians which has taken place recently in Israel and in the occupied Palestinian territory, such as the unprovoked attack on Palestinian workers from Gaza and incursion of Israeli army in the Health Centre of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East in Gaza town. These and similar continued actions by the Israeli Government, the occupying Power, and individuals, as well as the lack of effective measures by the international community to put an end to this policy, have seriously eroded the trust of many Palestinians in the capacity or willingness of the international community to help bring about a peaceful settlement. The participants were deeply worried about the prospect that Israeli intransigence and aggression would further deepen frustration among the Palestinians and that a cycle of violence would render more difficult the search for a peaceful settlement.

The participants expressed their resolute support to the Palestinian people struggling against the Israeli occupation and defending the Palestinian society and its social, economic and political institutions against the illegal onslaught of settlers and of the Israeli occupation forces.

10. The participants expressed their support to the Israeli peace forces, who are working under difficult conditions, especially after the coming into power of an extremist Government. They called upon European NGOs and institutions to support the Israeli peace forces and to give them their full support and co-operation.

11. Participants appealed to the Security Council to assume and discharge its responsibilities and to take urgent measures to ensure the physical protection and to guarantee the safety and security of the Palestinian people under the Israeli occupation, including prevention of deportation of

Palestinians, which has been repeatedly condemned by the Security Council and General Assembly. The participants were encouraged that the European Governments, indeed all Governments except that of the United States, supported the proposal for taking practical measures for the protection of the Palestinian people and urged all Governments to transform their stated will into practical action without delay. In this respect, the participants welcomed the decision of the European Community to send a representative to Jerusalem as a step in the right direction.

The participants stressed the urgent need to ensure a permanent presence of European NGOs in the occupied Palestinian territory in order to monitor the human rights situation there and to provide any possible protection to the civilians. They further urged the European Parliament, other European institutions and all European Governments to undertake all necessary measures in that respect.

The participants also urged the Security Council, particularly the permanent members, which include three European Governments, to make every effort to facilitate the convening of the International Peace Conference on the Middle East and to adopt interim measures, including the deployment of a United Nations force to safeguard the physical security of the people of occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem and the people in other occupied Arab territories.

12. The participants called upon European NGOs to continue their co-operation and joint activities together with Israeli peace forces and Palestinians in the spirit of the "1990: Time for Peace" initiative, and to participate in the planned follow-up actions during 1990-1991. They also supported initiatives to engage broader participation of peace forces from Arab countries in this co-operation, which should also aim at curbing the continuing dangerous military buildup in the Middle East.

13. The participants requested the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to provide every assistance through the newly elected ECCP to European NGOs in implementing their resolutions on the question of Palestine. Such support could include sponsoring effective meetings on special issues, etc. and the promotion of a better understanding of the issues of special concern to the Palestinians and Israelis.

The participants also called upon the Committee to ensure that the United Nations regional and international NGO meetings should continue to provide an opportunity for diverse points of views to be expressed so that a meaningful dialogue might continue to be held among people of good will on all sides. The participants called on all European countries to intensify their support for the Committee's activities. European Governments were urged to participate in the work of the Committee as members or observers.

14. The aim of the Symposium was - in addition to a meaningful dialogue - to develop practical activities for concerted action by European NGOs. That part of the work was therefore conducted in workshops, and the Symposium received their recommendations. The participants commend them to all European NGOs for their careful consideration and implementation.

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Annex II

WORKSHOP REPORTS

Workshop 1: Refugees (Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic)

The Workshop, attended by 45 participants, was opened by a statement by Mr. Gabriel Habib, who spoke of the human dimension of the problems of the refugees in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan (and also of those in the occupied territories). He noted that, especially following the intifadah, improvements in the political scene were not followed by improvements in the socio-economic fields. The economic problems had recently been augmented by the crisis in the Gulf region. The focusing of media attention on that crisis, had increased the fear of transfer of Palestinians from the occupied territories. A new exodus to Lebanon or Jordan was possible both from the Gulf region and from the occupied territories, and in the latter case, in order to make way for the settlement of Soviet Jews.

Mr. Habib also emphasized the dire economic needs of the refugees in Lebanon and, to a lesser extent, in the other areas. For that purpose, there was a need to support UNRWA as a main agency dealing with refugees, to educate world public opinion on the problems and origins of the refugee problem and to provide humanitarian services. There was also a need to deal adequately with the results of the intifadah but without neglecting the needs of Palestinian refugees elsewhere. NGOs have to make an effort to co-ordinate and co-operate with local organizations so that duplication of services would be avoided.

A discussion ensued on the issue of the return of refugees of Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan (and also of the West Bank and Gaza) to their homeland. Refugees, it was argued, even existed within the pre-1948 borders and their problems had to be addressed. Several participants highlighted the need to actively support the right of return and press their respective Governments to implement United Nations resolutions on that issue.

In that respect, while the participants abhorred anti-Semitism in all its forms, it seemed ironic that Soviet Jews secured public sympathy in their plight to immigrate and settle in Israel, while little or no support was given to the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes. The immigration of Soviet Jews would exacerbate the return of the Palestinians to their homes.

Several participants stressed the importance of a political solution of the refugee problem while others highlighted the need for practical support especially for the refugees in Lebanon who were suffering from continuous war and displacement. In Lebanon, three camps had been completely destroyed, with several others, including Shatilla and Borj el-Barajneh, suffering badly. The

refugees were surviving without running water or electricity, with the United States dollar reaching an all-time high of nearly 1,200 Lebanese liras.

It was agreed that both political solidarity, as well as practical support were important and should be simultaneously addressed. There was a need to find local partners especially in Lebanon, to support income-generating projects, to support the children through establishing kindergartens and pre-school education and to look after their health and other needs.

There was a need for NGOs to educate and inform their public on all the issues relating to the refugee problem in order that the public would not easily be swayed from the central issues. Co-operation between local and foreign NGOs in Lebanon, like that currently taking place in the occupied territories, should be established and strengthened.

The clear message coming out of the discussions and deliberations of the workshop was that Palestinians who lived, and often suffered in silence, outside the occupied territories, and especially in Lebanon, should not be forgotten.

Workshop 2: Culture

The Chairperson introduced the session by suggesting that participants' proposals should take two dimensions; one, to defend and the other, to promote Palestinian culture.

Mr. As'ad Al As'ad, President of the Writers' Union, placed emphasis on the importance of culture in Palestinian life. He said that one of the main aims of the Israeli authorities was to eliminate the identity of Palestinian people by constantly attempting to destroy their culture. The means to do so included: prohibition of production of print media in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; banning of 5,000 titles; censorship was used blatantly and on a large scale; imprisonment, deportation and prosecution of persons who worked in the field of culture; closure of schools and universities.

Mr. Al As'ad also stated that the Union's activities and objectives were aimed at developing and promoting Palestinian literary culture.

Mr. George Ibrahim, President of the Actors' Union, talked about Israeli authorities' measures which hindered the development of theatre activities. Those included laws which limited commuting to Jerusalem - the only place Israeli law would allow performances to take place. Also, laws of censorship and forced entry to theatres and interruption of performances created an atmosphere of conflict and hostility.

The Actors' Union was established with the aim of encouraging actors to enrich their individual and collective experiences and exchanging and sharing that experience with other theatre unions and groups outside Palestine.

Palestine film production was limited and hindered by Israeli authorities' laws on security and censorship.

Ms. Lowahiz Abdul Hadi, Retired Area Education Officer, described effects on Palestinian children who were deprived of education rights and exposed to anaemic textbook measures by Israeli orders which included: censorship of all text material; removal of all Palestinian maps; removal of all words referring to freedom, resistance, nationality and love of land; around 100 titles were banned; closures of schools and universities which interrupted the education system were regularly implemented. Lack of media coverage exposing such measures caused further deterioration of the situation. Community education might compensate a little but did not provide continuity or a proper infrastructure.

Proposals:

1. To campaign for reopening of universities and schools on a permanent basis and to preserve the sanctity of educational institutions. Also to campaign for setting up a Palestinian scholarship fund. NGOs in returning to their countries are requested to send letters calling for the opening of schools and universities and to sever cultural and educational relationships with Israel until it complies with international law conventions. Letters should be sent to:

(a) The Summit of the Child;
(b) Universities;
(c) Student unions;
(d) Ministers of Cultural Affairs;
(e) Ministers of Education;
(f) Nobel Prize winners.

2. To facilitate an exchange of contacts between unions of actors, writers and other cultural organizations in Palestine and their counterparts in Europe. These contacts should be made in order to further co-operation.

3. Organize cultural events in Europe to attract and draw attention to Palestinian culture and to exchange groups and events so that an interactive link can be established.

4. Invite professional persons working in the cultural field to Palestine to witness cultural development and atmosphere firsthand, as well as to help to develop further the knowledge of Palestinian artists.

5. To mobilize through cultural issues the NGO community and to promote a positive image of the Palestinians. Palestinian cultural identity is expressed through song, dance, food, clothes and so on.

Workshop 3: Involving Jewish communities in Europe

Introducing the subject of the workshop, the point was made that the perspective for 1990/1991 could no longer be the same as that for 1989, when the same workshop met exactly one year ago. If the intifadah and the relations between the Israeli peace movements and the Palestinians were at the centre of attention last year, the crisis in the Gulf which may erupt into an armed conflict dominates the perspectives for this year.

There were several approaches among workshop participants to the question of how the Jewish communities of Europe could see their role. It was felt by one participant that Jewish communities should see world Judaism as a cultural entity from a pluralistic viewpoint rather than regard Israel as the centre of their preoccupations, a process that has already started in the United States. Although Jewish communities regard themselves very much part of the Western world, far more consideration should be given to the problems of the third world such as poverty and distribution of resources. Against the background of the present clash between two imperialist designs, one of the United States as the only major super Power left, and two, Iraq trying to unify the Arabs by violent means, European Jews could choose a balanced view which should not depend on which country they live in but on Jewish values and morals, on peace, on solidarity with oppressed people such as the Palestinians who have suffered in the hands of part of the Jewish people, that is of Israel. Another participant strongly criticized European Jewry for not protesting vehemently enough against recent pogroms by Israel against Palestinians. It would be most important to find ways to mobilize more European Jews to protest against the repression in the occupied territories.

Turning to the effects of massive immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel and directly or indirectly to East Jerusalem and other occupied territories, two participants called on the Workshop to support a petition addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (text attached), regarding the "forced transfer" of Soviet Jews. Opinions varied strongly among participants whether the use of the term "forced" was appropriate in this connection. While there was general consensus that the subject of immigration from the Soviet Union was of utmost importance in that it constitutes a threat to the Palestinian population, the view was expressed by several participants that this petition should be submitted to the plenary session and the Workshop should not put it to a vote. Others recognized that although the "transfer" or the immigration of Soviet Jews was not a "forced" one, their choice of countries was very limited, and with the exception of a small quota offered by the United States, their choice was "oriented" towards Israel. Mention was made again of the creation of the Committee for Open Borders in order to persuade countries to accept a certain number of Soviet Jews. Apart from the threat to the Palestinian population, massive immigration of Soviet Jews creates major problems in Israel especially with regard to housing, creating homelessness among older settlers who cannot afford to pay the high rents for which new immigrants receive State allowances.

As to mobilizing Jewish communities against repressive Israeli government policies, one participant reported on her experiences in Europe and the United States where she found Jews much more supportive of Israel and far less critical, perhaps due to guilt feelings, than many Jews in Israel. Another participant found signs of increasingly critical attitudes among European Jews regarding the Israeli law of return.

Another tendency among quite a few European Jews seemed to be an indifference or a refusal to become involved in the Israeli-Palestinian issue out of a certain revulsion against the repressive Israeli government policies. It is, however, important to influence these Jews to take an active stand. Thus, the International Jewish Peace Union is planning to hold a conference with the participation of Jews from Europe and the United States, Israelis and Palestinians with the purpose of mobilizing Jewish communities for more justice towards the Palestinian people.

Concern was expressed that part of the money raised by Jewish communities for Israel was going into purchase or production of arms and projectiles that will hurt Palestinians. It was explained that the fund-raising bodies which donate money to the Israeli authorities had no control over the eventual use of it. One way may be to question the status of these bodies in the different countries. One participant brought up the possibility of boycott campaigns by Jewish organizations critical of Israeli repressive policies and practices of Israeli goods which has reportedly been attempted in one country.

The importance of transmitting information quickly to NGOs on serious incidents occurring in Israel was stressed so that subsequent action can be taken.

Some participants referred to the fact that the current crisis had serious implications for their work within the Jewish communities and had expected the workshop to comment on the new situation which they were facing, that is the PLO backing of Iraq which is unacceptable to most Jews and Israelis who have been hitherto in the peace camp and in support of Palestinians' right to a State. Whatever the reasons were that led the PLO to make this choice and the subsequent popular explosion in the West Bank in favour of Saddam Hussein, it is certainly going to be even more difficult to win support in the Jewish communities for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. The views differed on this. Some felt that the current crisis was a politically divisive issue and should therefore not be discussed. However, other participants entered into a short debate of this question. Thus, it was pointed out by one participant that the PLO position had been misrepresented by the media and, besides, the two sides, that is the Israeli peace camp and the Palestinians, who are also divided on this issue, do not have to agree on all matters. Be that as it may, the final point was made that the NGO community agreed to have as its basis a number of resolutions to which we are bound when meeting under United Nations auspices. One of these is that no country or territory can be acquired by the use of force, and

another, the United Nations Security Council's condemnation of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Workshop 4: Trade with the occupied territory (export and import)

We, the participants of Workshop 4, welcome the decisions that have been taken by the European Commission to support the Palestinian economy through the opening of the European market to Palestinian products.

NGOs support actions by European Governments and the European Parliament that strengthen the implementation of the decisions mentioned above, as well as individual initiatives taken by European governmental and non-governmental organizations.

In order to allow full implementation of the European decisions, Workshop 4 proposes specific actions.

European NGOs should co-operate closely with Palestinian producers/organizations, in order to identify specific economic needs of Palestinian society. Accordingly, NGOs encourage the Palestinians to express their specific requirements. For example, the EEC should be asked to extend the list of products (to include olive oil) that can be imported into Europe under preferential conditions.

European NGOs should provide appropriate technical assistance in order to develop the Palestinian economic infrastructure in the fields of production and export, and assist the Palestinians with know-how concerning marketing in Europe.

NGOs are urged to provide documentation on Israeli obstruction of direct Palestinian export and submit such information to European politicians, who should be encouraged to monitor such cases and, if necessary, put pressure on the Israeli authorities within the framework of the existing instruments of the EEC.

NGOs consider that, as long as the Israeli occupation lasts, it is difficult for Palestinian products to be competitive on the European markets within the framework provided by the EEC decision of 17 October 1986. It is, therefore, necessary to promote other forms of assistance.

NGOs should use marketing campaigns for Palestinian products to arouse public awareness in Europe for the political, economic and social situation of the Palestinian people. With a view to the European single market of 1993, the European Community should link the extension of its existing co-operation agreement with Israel to respect by the Israeli authorities for human rights and for the United Nations decisions in the occupied territories.

As to the levying of taxes in the occupied territories by the Israeli authorities, NGOs should urge their Governments and the European Commission to take the necessary steps to assure the strict observance of the relevant Geneva Convention. Thus, the Israeli authorities would be prevented from using taxation as a means to promote Israeli products at the expenses of Palestinian producers.

The EEC should be asked to negotiate with Israel to allow for direct European exports into the occupied territories with special regard to agricultural inputs, goods of prime necessity and industrial equipment. Similarly, NGOs should encourage European exporters of such goods to deal directly with Palestinians. And the European authorities should be asked to ensure that all exports are unimpeded.

Finally, European NGOs are encouraged to find European trade associations able and willing to promote Palestinian products for commercial, as well as political reasons.

Annex III

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Annex IV

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Participant NGOs

ASOCIACION AMIGOS DE PALESTINA
ASOCIACION NACIONAL AMIGOS PUEBLO PALESTINA "AL FATAH"
ASOCIACION PRO DERECHOS HUMANOS
ASSOCIATION DE SOLIDARITE FRANCO-ARABE
ASSOCIATION FRANCE-PALESTINE
ASSOCIATION ICELAND-PALESTINE
ASSOCIATION MEDICALE FRANCO-PALESTINIENNE
ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF PALESTINE
(Vereinigung der Freunde Palaestinas e.V.)
ASSOCIATION OF ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PHYSICIANS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
ASSOCIATION POUR RECONSTRUIRE EMMAUS
ASSOCIATION SUISSE-PALESTINE
CENTRO INTERNAZIONALE CROCEVIA
CIMADE - Service Oecuménique d'Entraide
COMITE CATHOLIQUE CONTRE LA FAIM ET POUR LE DEVELOPPEMENT
COMITE DE SOLIDARITE AVEC LE PEUPLE PALESTINIEN
(Comitato di Solidarieta con il popolo palestinese)
COMITE PALESTINE ET ISRAEL VIVRONT
COMMISSION DES EGLISES POUR LES AFFAIRES INTERNATIONALES
COMMITTEE OF YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS OF THE USSR
COUNCIL FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE ARAB BRITISH UNDERSTANDING - CAABU
CYPRUS PALESTINE ACTIVE SOLIDARITY (KYPEA)
CZECHOSLOVAKIA COMMITTEE OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLES OF AFRICA, ASIA AND LATIN AMERICA
DANISH PALESTINIAN FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION
DIALOG ISRAEL-PALAESTINA
DUTCH PALESTINE COMMITTEE
FINNISH-ARAB FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY
FINNISH-PALESTINE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE
FRIENDS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE
FRIENDS OF THE PALESTINIAN UNIVERSITIES
GENERAL UNION OF PALESTINIAN WOMEN (GUPW) - UNITED KINGDOM BRANCH
GERMAN-PALESTINIAN ASSOCIATION
(Deutsch-Palestinensische Gesellschaft - DPG)
GREEK COMMITTEE FOR INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF HUMANITARIAN LAW
INTERNATIONAL JEWISH PEACE UNION - FRANCE
INTERNATIONAL JEWISH PEACE UNION - AUSTRIA
INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR THE RIGHTS AND LIBERATION OF PEOPLES - Geneva
INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR THE RIGHTS AND LIBERATION OF PEOPLES - Florence
INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR THE RIGHTS AND LIBERATION OF PEOPLES - Paris
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF JOURNALISTS

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF STUDENTS
ITALIAN LEAGUE FOR THE RIGHTS AND LIBERATION OF PEOPLE - Milan
ITALIAN PEACE ASSOCIATION
LONDON FRIENDS OF PALESTINE
MEDICAL AID FOR PALESTINIANS
MEDISCH KOMITEE PALESTINA (MKP)
MIDDLE EAST COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
MIDDLE EAST RESOURCE CENTRE
MOUVEMENT CHRETIEN POUR LA PAIX
PALESTINA FORUM
PALESTINE COMMITTEE OF NORWAY
PALESTINE GROUPS IN NORWAY
PALESTINE SOLIDARITY ASSOCIATION OF SWEDEN (Palestine Groups of Sweden)
PALESTINE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN - London
PALESTINE STUDIES PROGRAMME, EXETER UNIVERSITY
PALESTINIAN WORKING WOMEN COMMITTEES
PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION FOR EURO-ARAB COOPERATION - Bruxelles
(Association parlementaire pour la coopération euro-arabe)
PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION FOR EURO-ARAB COOPERATION - Paris
PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION FOR EURO-ARAB COOPERATION - Geneva
PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION FOR EURO-ARAB COOPERATION - German Section
PAX CHRISTI INTERNATIONAL
RETURN
RUSSIAN PALESTINE FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY/USSR ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
SANAD - Community Service in Palestine
SOCIETY FOR AUSTRO-ARAB RELATIONS
SOLIDARITAETSDIENST INTERNATIONAL
SOVIET AFRO-ASIAN SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE
SOVIET WOMEN'S COMMITTEE
SPANISH NGO COMMITTEE ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE
TERRE DES HOMMES - FRANCE
UNION OF GERMAN AND PALESTINIAN WOMEN
(Deutsch Palaestinensischer Frauenverein e.V.)
UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION OF SWEDEN
"VISITARE LUOGHI DIFFICILI"
(Ex Campo Donne in Libanon - Cisgiordania)
WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION
WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM - Geneva
WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
WORLD PEACE COUNCIL
WORLD YWCA

<u>Observer NGOs</u>

ABNA EL BALAD
AD HOC COMMITEE FOR THE ARAB COMMUNITY
ADVOCATE FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE (AFC)
AKTION DRITTE WELT

AL-AUDAH
AL HADAF
ALTERNATIVE INFORMATION CENTRE
AMERICAN FRIENDS OF PALESTINE
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR MEDICAL AID
ARAB LABOUR ORGANIZATION
ARAB ORGANIZATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
ARAB WOMEN'S COUNCIL
ARAB WRITERS UNION IN ISRAEL
ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN'S COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL WORK IN PALESTINE
ASSOCIATION POUR L'UNION ENTRE LES PEUPLES JUIF ET PALESTINIEN
AUSTRIAN COMMITTEE FOR THE ARAB COMMUNITY HOSPITAL JERUSALEM
CGIL (Confédération générale des travailleurs italiens)
COMMITTEE FOR PALESTINIAN AND JEWISH STUDIES
CONSEJO NACIONAL DE DEFENSA DE LA SOVERANIA Y LA PAZ
COUNCIL FOR THE NATIONAL INTEREST
COUPS
DAR ALISLAM ALCHAIERATH
DATABASE PROJECT ON PALESTINIAN HUMAN RIGHTS
DAY OF LAND CASUALITIES
DEMOCRATIC FRONT FOR PEACE AND EQUALITY
EAFORD - UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
EGYPTIAN SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE
ENVIRONMENT AND PEACE ORGANIZATION
FIOM-CGIL/MILAN
FOUNDATION FRIENDS OF NAZARETH
FRIENDS WORLD COMMITTEE FOR CONSULTATION
GALILEE CENTER FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH
GENERAL FEDERATION OF TRADE UNION IN THE WEST BANK
GENERAL UNION OF PALESTINIAN WOMEN
GRUPPO DI RICERCA SUL MEDIO ORIENTE CONTEMPORANEO (GRMOC)
HEALTH SERVICES COUNCIL
INFORMATIONSSTELLE PALAESTINA
INTERNATIONAL JEWISH PEACE UNION (IJPU) - UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
ISRAEL/PALESTINE CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND INFORMATION
JAFFA RESEARCH CENTER
JERUSALEM PEACE SERVICE
MEDICAL AID FOR PALESTINE
MEDICO INTERNATIONAL e.v.
MIDDLE EAST QUESTIONS FORUM
NEAR EAST CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION OF CANADA (NECEF)
NORPAL - UNITED KINGDOM
NOVIB
OIKOS
ORGANISATION CANADIENNE DE SOLIDARITE ET DEVELOPPEMENT
PALESTINE COMMITTEE FOR NGOs
PALESTINE RED CRESCENT SOCIETY (PRCS)
PALESTINE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN - UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
PALESTINE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE - Washington
PALESTINE UNION OF DEMOCRATIC TEACHERS COMMITTEES

PALESTINIAN AGRICULTURAL RELIEF COMMITTEE (PARC)
PALESTINIAN DEMOCRATIC YOUTH ASSOCATION
PALESTINIAN MOTHER AND CHILD CARE SOCIETY
PALESTINIAN FEDERATION OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTTEES
PALESTINIAN WRITERS ASSOCIATION
PROGRESSIVE ARAB WOMEN COMMITTEE
PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT FOR PEACE
PUBLIC ASSOCIATION FOR CULTURE AND ART
SCHOLARSHIP FUND FOR PUBLICATION ON ISRAEL
UNION OF AGRICULTURAL WORK COMMITTEES
UNION OF ARAB JURISTS
UNION OF PALESTINIAN AMERICAN WOMEN - Palos Hills/California
UNION OF PALESTINIAN MEDICAL RELIEF COMMITTEES - Jerusalem
UNION OF PALESTINIAN WOMEN COMMITTEES
UNION OF PALESTINIAN WORKING WOMEN COMMITTEE IN INDEPENDENT PALESTINE
UNITED HOLY LAND FUND
WORLD PEACEMAKERS

NGO co-ordinating committees

EUROPEAN CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR NGOs ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE
INTERNATIONAL CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR NGOs ON THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

Panelists

Mr. Bashir Al-Khairi (Palestinian), a Palestinian lawyer and activist, spent several years in Israeli prisons; deported from Palestine in 1988; an advocate in Amman, Jordan

Mrs. Marie-Christine Aulas (France), Member of the European Parliament and Vice-President of the Euro-Arab Parliamentary Group

Dr. Mustafa Barghouti (Palestinian), President of the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees in the West Bank and Gaza

*Mr. Ghassan El-Khatib (Palestinian), Lecturer, Cultural Studies, Birzeit University; Director, Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre; Director, United Agricultural Company

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*Prevented by the Israeli authorities from leaving the occupied Palestinian territory.

Mrs. Maria Gazi (Greece), In-Charge of the Middle East Section, Greek Committee for International Democratic Solidarity

Mr. Maxim Ghilan (France), writer, poet and journalist; editor of Israel *and* Palestine Political Report; Founding member of the International Jewish Peace Union

Mrs. Tamar Gozansky (Israel), a Member of the Israeli Knesset, the Political Bureau CPI and the Secretariat of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality; Editor-in-Chief, Zo-Haderekh; active member of the Israeli Peace Movement

Ms. Salwa Hedeib (Palestinian), (speaking in lieu of Mr. Faisal Husseini), Member of the Arab Studies Centre in East Jerusalem; active in Palestinian unions and groups involved in the intifadah

*Mr. Faisal Husseini (Palestinian), Director of the Arab Studies Centre in East Jerusalem and considered one of the prominent leaders of the West Bank

*Mr. Younis Jaru (Palestinian), known lawyer from Gaza and an activist in the intifadah

Mr. Flavio Lotti (Italy), National Speaker of the Italian Association for Peace and Co-ordinator of the Italian Secretariat of Nuclear Free Zone - Local Authorities

Dr. Ruchama Marton (Israel), Pediatrician and Psychiatrist; Professor at the Tel Aviv University and Haifa University Founder of the Association of Israeli Palestinian Physicians for Human Rights

Ms. Rana Nashashebi (Palestinian), woman activist in the intifadah

Mrs. Sarah Pakinen (Finland)

Mrs. Carla Pecis (Italy), Member: National Committee Italia/Palestine, Italo-Arab Friendship Association, Centro Internazionale Crocevia and National Secretary, Oil and Chemical Union

Mr. Nabeel Sha'ath (Palestinian), Chairman of the Political Committee of the Palestine National Council and Adviser to H.E. Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization

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*Prevented by the Israeli authorities from leaving the occupied Palestinian territory.

Workshop leaders

Mr. As'ad Al As'ad, Editor-In-Chief of the Palestinian magazine Al-Khateb and Secretary-General of the Palestinian Writers' Union in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

Mr. Gabriel Habib, Director, Middle East Council of Churches

Mrs. Yolanda Jaquemet

Mr. Stephan Jaquemet

Mr. Roberto Muggia, General Confederation of Italian Workers

Members and observers of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

H.E. Mrs. Absa Claude Diallo, Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations in New York and Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

H.E. Mr. Alexander Borg Olivier, Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations in New York and Rapporteur of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

H.E. Mr. Samuel R. Insanally, Permanent Representative of Guyana to the United Nations in New York

H.E. Mr. Ismail Razali, Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations in New York

Mr. Zuhdi Labib Terzi, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations in New York

States Members of the United Nations represented by Observers

Algeria
Austria
Bahrain
Bangladesh
Brazil
Bulgaria
China
Colombia
Cuba
Indonesia
Iraq
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Morocco
Mongolia
Oman
Romania
Saudi Arabia
Senegal

Côte d'Ivoire
Egypt
Greece
Hungary
India
Somalia
Sweden
Syria
Turkey
Yemen

United Nations specialized agencies and bodies

HABITAT
ILO
UNCTAD
UNRWA
WHO

Intergovernmental organizations

League of Arab States

Other organizations having received a standing invitation to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly as observers

Palestine

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